

Amendments to the Specification

V Please amend the specification in accordance with the following.

Replace the paragraph that immediately follows the title with the following rewritten paragraph:

A1 This application claims priority from the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/297001, filed June 8, 2001, and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/315255, filed August 27, 2001.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 11 with the following rewritten paragraph:

A2 ~~The present inventors have recognized~~ In response to the deficiencies and problems inherent in the prior art, ~~and in response thereto conducted intensive research~~ has been conducted in developing innovative labial pads. ~~The inventors have~~ It has been discovered that situating at least one notch in the periphery of at least that portion of an absorbent article, such as a labial pad, to be located nearest the clitoris minimizes the likelihood that the absorbent article will come into irritating contact with the clitoris. ~~The inventors~~ It has also been discovered that situating at least one notch in the periphery of at least that portion of an absorbent article, such as a labial pad, to be located nearest the perineum minimizes the likelihood that the absorbent article will come into irritating contact with the perineum.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 11 with the following rewritten paragraph:

A3 The absorbent article (40) also has a thickness, caliper or height (H), as illustrated at least in FIGs. 5 and 6, measured along a line laying generally parallel to the z-axis, Z-Z. The minimum thickness of the absorbent article (40) typically is no less than about 9; alternatively, no less than about 8; alternatively, no less than about 7; alternatively, no less than about 6; alternatively, no less than about 5; alternatively, no less than about 4; alternatively, no less than about 3; alternatively, no less than about 2; alternatively, no less than about 1; or alternatively, no less than about 0.5 mm. The maximum thickness of the absorbent article (40) typically is no greater than about 1; alternatively, no greater than about 2; alternatively, no greater than about 3; alternatively, no greater than about 4; alternatively, no greater than about 5; alternatively, no greater than about 6; alternatively, no greater than about 7; alternatively, no greater than about 8; alternatively, no greater than about 9; or alternatively, no greater than about 10 mm. Thus, the absorbent article (40) may have a thickness of about 10 mm or less; although the approximate thickness of the absorbent article may vary

according to, *inter alia*, the general design and intended disposition of the absorbent article within the vestibule (42) of a female wearer.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 18 with the following rewritten paragraph:

A4 The absorbent (66) also desirably has a basis weight of less than about 600 grams per square meter (gsm). Stated differently, the absorbent (66) typically has a maximum basis weight of no greater than about 600; alternatively, no greater than about 500; alternatively, no greater than about 400; alternatively, no greater than about 300; alternatively, no greater than about 200; or alternatively, no greater than about 100 gsm. Generally, the absorbent (66) also has a minimum basis weight of typically no less than about 0.1; alternatively, no less than about 50; alternatively, no less than about 100; alternatively, no less than about 150; alternatively, no less than about 200; alternatively, no less than about 250; alternatively, no less than about 300; alternatively, no less than about 350; alternatively, no less than about 400; alternatively, no less than about 450; alternatively, no less than about 500; or alternatively, no less than about 550 gsm. Thus, the absorbent (66) may have a basis weight of about 600 gsm or less; although the approximate basis weight of the absorbent may vary according to, *inter alia*, the general design and intended disposition of the absorbent article (40) within the vestibule (42) of a female wearer. A specific example of a suitable absorbent would be similar to a coform material made of a blend of polypropylene and cellulose fibers and used in [[KOTEX®]] KOTEX maxi pantliners and obtainable from Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Neenah, WI, USA.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 10 with the following rewritten paragraph:

A5 The baffle (64) may be maintained in secured relation with the absorbent (66) by bonding all or a portion of the adjacent surfaces to one another. A variety of bonding methods known to one of skill in the art may be utilized to achieve any such secured relation. Examples of such methods include, but are not limited to, ultrasonics, thermal bonding, or the application of adhesives in a variety of patterns between the two adjoining surfaces. A specific example of a baffle material would be similar to a polyethylene film used on [[KOTEX®]] KOTEX pantliners and obtainable from Pliant Corporation, Schaumburg, IL, USA.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 23 with the following rewritten paragraph:

AG The cover (62) is provided for comfort and conformability and functions to direct bodily exudate(s) away from the body and toward the absorbent (66). The cover (62) should retain little or no liquid in its structure so that it provides a relatively comfortable and non-irritating surface next to the tissues within the vestibule (42) of a female wearer. The cover (62) can be constructed of any woven or nonwoven material which is also easily penetrated by bodily fluids contacting its surface. Examples of suitable materials include rayon, bonded carded webs of polyester, polypropylene, polyethylene, nylon, or other heat-bondable fibers, polyolefins, such as copolymers of polypropylene and polyethylene, linear low-density polyethylene, aliphatic esters such as polylactic acid, finely perforated film webs and net material also work well. A specific example of a suitable cover material would be similar to a bonded carded web made of polypropylene and polyethylene used as a cover stock for [[KOTEX®]] KOTEX pantliners and obtainable from Sandler Corporation, Germany. Other examples of suitable materials are composite materials of a polymer and a nonwoven fabric material. The composite materials are typically in the form of integral sheets generally formed by the extrusion of a polymer onto a web of spunbond material. The fluid permeable cover (62) can also contain a plurality of apertures (not shown) formed therein which are intended to increase the rate at which bodily fluid(s) can penetrate into the absorbent (66).

Replace the Abstract on page 20, with the rewritten Abstract set forth on the following, separate page: